

## Message Text

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ACTION TRSE-00

INFO OCT-01 EA-11 NEA-14 ISO-00 IO-14 L-03 H-03 PA-04

PRS-01 USIA-15 SP-03 AID-20 EB-11 NSC-07 RSC-01

CIEP-03 SS-20 STR-08 OMB-01 CEA-02 CIAE-00 COME-00

FRB-03 INR-11 NSAE-00 XMB-07 OPIC-12 LAB-06 SIL-01

INT-08 DRC-01 /191 W

----- 094955

R 291002Z AUG 74

FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6497

INFO JSSBKR/AMCONSUL KARACHI 1560

AMCONSUL LAHORE

AMEMBASSY MANILA

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 01 OF 02 ISLAMABAD 8300

STATE PASS AID FOR DISASTER RELIEF OFFICE

MANILA PASS USADB

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ECRE, EFIN, PK

SUBJEC : TARBELA DAM

REFS: A. ISLAMABAD 8105

B. ISLAMABAD 8235

1. SUMMARY. DANGER TO MAIN DAM STRUCTURE DECREASES AS RESERVOIR FALLS. RESERVOIR LEVEL HAD BEEN DRAWN DOWN BY APPROXIMATELY 50 FEET SINCE AUGUST 24 OR APPROXIMATELY ONE-THIRD OF TOTAL TO BE DRAINED. CONSULTANTS REPORT DRAINAGE PROCEEDING ACCORDING TO SCHEDULE. FULL EXTENT OF DAMAGE WILL NOT BE KNOWN UNTIL RESERVOIR DRAINED. RUMORS ARE LEADING TO A LIMITED DEGREE OF PANIC IN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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DOWNSTREAM VILLAGES WHICH THE GOP IS MOVING TO DISPELL.

GOP OFFICIAL STATEMENTS HAVE BEEN RELATIVELY ACCURATE AND UNEMOTIONAL WITH LITTLE ATTEMPT TO ASSIGN BLAME FOR PROBLEMS. END SUMMARY.

2. AUGUST 29 EDITION OF SEMI-OFFICIAL PAKISTAN TIMES GIVES FOLLOWING ACCOUNT OF INTERVIEW WITH FEDERAL MINISTER FOR FINANCE, MUBASHIR HASAN. BEGIN PAK TIMES ARTICLE: DR. HASAN STATED THAT THERE WAS NO BASIS FOR ANY ALARM OR PANIC DUE TO DAMAGE TO TARBELA DAM TUNNELS. HE WAS TALKING TO NEWSMEN AFTER A VISIT TO THE DAM SITE ON RECEIPT OF REPORTS THAT SOME PEOPLE LIVING ALONG THE BANKS OF THE INDUS RIVER BETWEEN TARBELA AND ATTOCK HAD STARTED LEAVING THEIR VILLAGES OUT OF PANIC ON ACCOUNT OF CIRCULATION OF RUMORS. THE MINISTER SAID SHOULD AN EMERGENCY ARISE, WHICH AT PRESENT DOES NOT EXIST, THE VILLAGES LIKELY TO BE AFFECTED BY THE EMERGENCY WILL BE NOTIFIED WELL IN ADVANCE OVER THE RADIO. FOR THIS PURPOSE, THE GOVERNMENT HAVE DEVISED WARNING SIGNALS. HE MADE CLEAR THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAD SO FAR RECEIVED NO WARNING OR INDICATION FROM THE EXPERTS THAT A SITUATION WARRANTING EMERGENCY MEASURES DOWNSTREAM EXISTED. HE STATED THEY MUST BE READY FOR ALL EVENTUALITIES AND PREPARE THEMSELVES. PREPARATION OF THESE PLANS WOULD BE A MATTER OF PRECAUTION. HE, THEREFORE, ADVISED THE RESIDENTS OF VILLAGES ALONG THE BANKS OF INDUS DOWNSTREAM THE TARBELA NOT TO LEAVE THEIR PLACES UNLESS A WARNING WAS SOUNDED AND THE NAMES OF THE VILLAGES WERE SPECIFICALLY ANNOUNCED OVER THE RADIO.

3. DR. HASAN, AFTER A DETAILED VISIT OF THE SITE, INFORMED NEWSMEN THAT THE LEVEL OF THE WATER IN TARBELA LAKE HAD GONE DOWN BY 50 FEET SINCE AUGUST 24. HE SAID DROP OF EVERY INCH OF WATER IN THE LAKE MEANT SOMEWHAT LOWER VELOCITY IN THE TUNNELS WHICH LESSENNED CHANCES OF ANY MISHAP. HE STATED THE DANGER IS RECEDING AS RAPIDLY AS THE WATER LEVEL IS GOING DOWN. HOWEVER, THEY MUST NOT FORGET THAT EVEN NOW THE DEPTH OF WATER IN THE LAKE IS OVER 300 FEET. HE SAID THAT THE SITUATION HAD DEFINITIELY IMPROVED DURING THE LAST FOUR DAYS. TO A QUESTION, THE FINANCE MINISTER SAID THAT THE PROBLEM DID NOT LIE WITH THE MAIN DAM, BUT IT WAS WITH THE STRUCTURE WHICH TAKES WATER OUT OF THE TUNNELS. SINCE THE STRUCTURE OF THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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INTAKE AND OUTLET AREAS OF THE TUNNELS IS SUBMERGED, IT WOULD TAKE TIME TO STUDY THE SITUATION, WHICH WILL BE DONE ONLY WHEN THE WATER LEVEL IN THE RESERVOIR WENT DOWN. ONLY AFTER THIS WOULD IT BE DETERMINED WHETHER REDESIGNING OF THE TUNNELS WAS NEEDED.

4. DR. HASAN SAID THAT TARBELA WAS SUCH A BIG DAM THAT EVEN A SMALL DAMAGE WOULD COST LOTS OF MONEY. HE STATED:

"OUR RESOURCES ARE CONSTRAINED AND I CANNOT SAY AS TO WHAT REQUIREMENTS WOULD BE THERE AND WHEREFROM WILL THESE BE MET." HE CONTINUED: "HUNDREDS OF MILLIONS OF DOLLARS HAVE BEEN SPENT ON THE DAM. WE ARE PAYING HUGE AMOUNTS OF INTEREST ON IT. WE HAD MADE ECONOMIC PLANS ON THE ASSUMPTION THAT BENEFITS FROM THIS DAM WILL SOON BE AVAILABLE. IN VIEW OF IT, WE ARE MUCH WORSE OFF." WHEN ASKED AS TO WHERE THE MONEY ON THE REPAIR WORK WILL COME FROM, THE FINANCE MINISTER SAID THAT IT WOULD NOT BE A BIG PROBLEM AS ALL THOSE FRIENDLY COUNTRIES WHO HELPED IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE DAM WOULD COME FORWARD AND PROVIDE MORE HELP SO THAT ADVANTAGES FROM THIS PROJECT STARTED REACHING THE COMMON MAN. HE, HOWEVER, POINTED OUT THAT OTHER GOVERNMENTS WOULD BE ASKED FOR FINANCIAL HELP ONLY IF IT WAS FELT NECESSARY. DR. HASAN SAID THE DELAY IN COMPLETION OF THE PROJECT WOULD DEPEND ON THE EXTENT OF DAMAGE. HE SAID: "SO FAR, THERE IS NO INDICATION AS TO WHAT IS THE TIME SPAN REQUIRED FOR REPAIRS". HE POINTED OUT THAT THE RAINY SEASON WAS NOT YET OVER. IF FLOODS AGAIN FILLED THE LAKE "WE WOULD AGAIN HAVE THE PROBLEM OF DRAINING IT OUT." DR. HASAN SAID THAT BESIDES LOSING WATER WHICH WOULD HAVE PROVED VERY USEFUL FOR THE NEXT WINTER CROPS, THERE WERE POSSIBILITIES OF DELAY OF POWER GENERATION FROM TARBELA STATION. THE MINISTER TOLD A QUESTIONER THAT IT WAS TOO EARLY TO PUT BLAME ON ANYONE OF THE DAMAGE TO THE TUNNELS. ONLY THE INVESTIGATION COULD REVEAL IT AND IT WOULD TAKE A LONG TIME. HE STATED: "OF COURSE, THERE HAVE BEEN DEMANDS IN BOTH THE HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT TO FIND OUT AS TO WHAT HAS HAPPENED AND APPORTION BLAME BUT, TO QUOTE THE PRIME MINISTER, 'IT IS TOO EARLY TO PUT BLAME ON ANYONE'".

5. THE MINISTER WAS INFORMED THAT AS A RESULT OF LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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LOWERING OF THE RESERVOIR TUNNEL ONE HAD STARTED DRAWING AIR AT THE INTAKE. ENCOURAGED BY THIS DEVELOPMENT, THE CONSULTANTS OPENED ONE OF THE THREE GATES OF TUNNEL ONE FROM ITS PARTIAL OPENING AT 38 FEET TO A FULL 45 FEET. THE FULL OPENING OF ONE GATE OFFERED AN IMPROVED CONDITION AS FAR AS OPERATION OF TUNNEL ONE IS CONCERNED. CONSEQUENTLY, THE DISCHARGE DOWNSTREAM INCREASED TO 3.86 LAKH (386,000) CUSECS WHICH IS LIKELY TO RISE SLIGHTLY MORE BUT WILL REMAIN LESS THAN FOUR LAKH (400,000) CUSECS. THE POWER HOUSE BUILDING IS SAFE AND STEPS ARE BEING TAKEN TO PREVENT ANY

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ACTION TRSE-00

INFO OCT-01 EA-11 NEA-14 ISO-00 IO-14 L-03 H-03 PA-04

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FRB-03 INR-11 NSAE-00 XMB-07 OPIC-12 LAB-06 SIL-01

INT-08 DRC-01 /191 W

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R 291002Z AUG 74

FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6498

INFO AMCONSUL KARACHI

AMCONSUL LAHORE

AMEMBASSY MANILA

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WASHOUT OF CELLULAR COFFER DAM DOWNSTREAM OF THE POWER HOUSE. THESE COFFER DAMS ARE TEMPORARY STRUCTURES WHOSE PURPOSE IS TO FACILITATE CONSTRUCTION OF THE POWER HOUSE LATER WHEN TUNNELS ONE AND TWO WILL BE CLOSED. THERE HAS BEEN NO INCREASE IN THE INFLOW DURING THE LAST TWENTY-FOUR HOURS AS WAS EXPECTED. THE ABUTMENT AND MAIN EMBANKMENT OF THE DAM CONTINUE TO BEHAVE NORMALLY.

6. PUNJAB MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND PHYSICAL PLANNING HAKMEEN KHAN HAS SAID ALL NECESSARY ARRANGEMENTS HAVE BEEN MADE FOR THE SAFETY OF INHABITANTS LIVING ALONG THE BANKS OF THE INDUS RIVER. THE MINISTER, WHO ARRIVED IN RAWALPINDI ON TUESDAY, ON WEDNESDAY VISITED A NUMBER OF TOWNS IN CHACH AREA, INCLUDING GHOURGHUSHTI, HAZRO, LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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BAHBUDI, SHAMSABAD AND ATTOCK. MR. HAKMEEN, WHO INSPECTED THE RELIEF MEASURES TO BE TAKEN IN CASE OF EMERGENCY, STATED THAT THE AREAS LIKELY TO BE AFFECTED BY FLOOD HAVE BEEN DIVIDED INTO EIGHT SECTORS WHICH WILL BE CONTROLLED BY A FLOOD CONTROL CENTER ESTABLISHED AT CAMPBELLPUR UNDER THE CHARGE OF ADDITIONAL DEPUTY COMMISSIONER (GENERAL). THESE SECTORS HAVE BEEN ESTABLISHED AT HAZRO, SHAMSABAD, DAMAN, ATTOCK, BAROTHA IN ATTOCK TEHSIL AND MAKHAD AND IN PINDIGHEB TEHSIL WHICH WILL WORK UNDER THE CHARGE OF SENIOR OFFICERS. EACH SECTOR HAS FURTHER BEEN DIVIDED INTO VARIOUS SUBSECTORS. WIRELESS SETS HAVE BEEN PLACED AT THE FLOOD CONTROL CENTER AND DIFFERENT SECTORS WHICH ARE WORKING AROUND THE CLOCK AND WILL COMMUNICATE INFORMATION TO THE PUBLIC IN CASE OF FLOOD. THE ARRANGEMENTS OF VEHICLES HAVE BEEN MADE AT THE SECTOR LEVEL WHILE CYCLE RIDERS AND HORSEMEN HAVE BEEN KEPT IN SUBSECTORS TO COMMUNICATE THE INFORMATION ABOUT FLOOD AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE. THE MINISTER SAID THAT RELIEF CAMPS HAVE BEEN SET UP AT HAZARA ROAD, AT ABANDONED REFUGEE CAMPS NEAR CEMENT FACTORY, AT FAUJI TEXTILE MILLS AND AT THREE EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS AT HASANABDAL WHERE ARRANGEMENTS HAVE BEEN MADE FOR THE ACCOMMODATION OF NEARLY 9,000 PERSONS WHICH CAN BE FURTHER EXPANDED TO ACCOMMODATE 40,000 PERSONS. SO FAR, THE MINISTER SAID, ONLY 130 PERSONS HAVE ARRIVED IN RELIEF CAMPS IN HASANABDAL. ALL THESE PERSONS HAVE BEEN VACCINATED AGAINST EPIDEMIC DISEASES AND ARRANGMENTS HAVE BEEN MADE FOR OPENING FAIR PRICE SHOPS AT THE RELIEF CAMPS. HE SAID A RELIEF EVACUATION PLAN HAS ALSO BEEN CHALKED OUT. MR. HAKMEEN, DURING HIS VISIT TO THE CHACH AREA, MET PEOPLE AND APPEALED TO THEM NOT TO FEEL PANICKY AS ALL SAFETY MEASURES HAVE BEEN TAKEN BY THE GOVERNMENT. END PAK TIMES ARTICLE.

7. IBRD RESIDENT REPRESENTATIVE STATES THAT HE WAS INFORMED AUGUST 28 BY ALEXANDER GIBBS COMPANY THAT DRAWDOWN OF RESERVOIR IS PROCEEDING ACCORDING TO SCHEDULE.

8. WITH REGARD TO "QUESTIMATES OF DAMAGE TO TUNNEL IN US \$5-100 MILLION RANGE," MENTIONED IN REFTEL B, WE MUST EMPHASIZE THAT IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO ACCURATELY ESTIMATE EXTENT OF DAMAGE UNTIL RESERVOIR IS DRAINED IN APPROXIMATELY LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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TWO TO THREE WEEKS.

9. THERE HAVE BEEN, PRIMARILY IN THE URDU PRESS, A SERIES OF ARTICLES ALLEGING AMONG OTHER THINGS THAT SOME ENGINEERS HAD COMPLAINED PRIOR TO THE CURRENT PROBLEMS OF INADEQUATE DESIGN OR POOR CONSTRUCTION. SOME ALLEGATIONS HAVE BEEN

MADE OF MONEY CHANGING HANDS AND IN ONE ARTICLE TYING  
FORMER PRESIDENT AYUB'S FAMILY TO SUCH AN EXCHANGE. THESE  
STORIES HAVE NOT BEEN WIDESPREAD AND NO SINGLE ALLEGATION  
HAS BEEN REPEATED IN ANY NUMBER OF NEWSPAPERS.

10. COMMENT. A FEW OF THE FACTS REPEATED ABOVE FROM THE  
PAKISTAN TIMES' ARTICLE MAY NOT BE ENTIRELY ACCURATE.  
HOWEVER, WE BELIEVE THE ARTICLE IS SUBSTANTIALLY CORRECT  
AND IS IMPORTANT IN DEMONSTRATING THE EVENHANDED AND UN-  
EMOTIONAL APPROACH BEING TAKEN BY THE GOP. MUBASHIR HASAN'S  
STATEMENT IS SIGNIFICANT IN THAT IT GIVES NO CREDENCE  
TO THE VARIOUS RUMORS CIRCULATING IN PAKISTAN AND AGAIN  
REQUESTS THAT ATTEMPTS TO PLACE ANY BLAME BE POSTPONED  
UNTIL ALL THE FACTS ARE KNOWN. THE GOP COULD EASILY  
HAVE POINTED OUT THAT MOST OF THE AWARDING OF CONTRACTS  
AND DESIGN WORK WAS DONE UNDER AN EARLIER GOVERNMENT,  
BUT THEY HAVE NOT TAKEN THIS ROUTE.  
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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
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**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 29 AUG 1974  
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**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** martinml  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
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**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** C : TARBELA DAM  
**TAGS:** ECRE, EFIN, PK, US  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005